

service, she continued her educational pursuits and received a Bachelor of Science Degree in Social Work, a Masters Degree in Social Work, and an Executive Masters of Science Degree in Health Administration.

Ms. Woods stated that her service to America taught her that she can succeed in her life pursuits. She has utilized her social work skills during her tenure in law enforcement and developed a Crime Victims Assistance Program with the Department of Veterans Affairs where she provided mental health services. Ms. Woods has also served as Director of Social Work at Delta Health Center and Aaron Henry Health Center. Ms. Woods is the daughter of the late Percy and Annie Woods.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Ms. Elizabeth Woods for her dedication to serving our great country.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ADAM SMITH

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 28, 2013

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Speaker, on Monday, February 25, 2013, I was unable to be present for recorded votes. Had I been present, I would have voted "yes" on rollcall vote No. 46 (on approving the journal) and "yes" on rollcall vote No. 47 (on the motion to suspend the rules and pass H.R. 667).

RECOGNIZING MR. LEE WRIGHT AND HIS 48 YEARS OF SERVICE

HON. GERALD E. CONNOLLY

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 28, 2013

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to thank and commend Lee Wright of Woodbridge, Va., for his 30 years of honorable service with the United States Air Force and for his subsequent 18 years of civilian service with the Defense Intelligence Agency. We are fortunate to have among us veterans with Mr. Wright's sense of duty and continued commitment to public service.

Mr. Wright began his career stationed at Cam Rahn Bay, RVN in 1964. After the war, Mr. Wright served at multiple air stations, eventually serving on staff at the USAF Military Air Command, Non-Commissioned Officer Academy. Mr. Wright soon moved on to DIA assignments spanning Western Europe, Turkey, Eurasia and Russia where he served multiple roles in intelligence operations. His devotion, hard work, and expertise on Russia led to successive roles within DIA's Russia/EURASIA Division, where Mr. Wright would eventually become Division Chief.

Since August of 2011, Mr. Wright has lent his considerable experience to DIA's Office of Congressional and Public Affairs where his leadership, work ethic and knowledge base have proven invaluable to his colleagues. There is little doubt that after 48 years of serving his country, Mr. Wright has earned some well-deserved R&R.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that my colleagues rise to join me in recognizing and thanking Lee Wright for his committed and selfless service to his colleagues and our country. We wish Mr. Wright, his wife, Dottie, and his family well in retirement.

RECOGNIZING RARE DISEASE DAY

HON. STEPHEN F. LYNCH

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 28, 2013

Mr. LYNCH. Mr. Speaker, today, February 28, 2013, marks the sixth annual International Rare Disease Day, a day to raise awareness of the nearly 7,000 rare diseases affecting 30 million Americans, or about one in ten people. Here in the United States, any disease affecting 200,000 people or fewer is considered rare.

Rare Disease Day is also an opportunity to celebrate the life-saving advances in science and research that continue to transform the diagnosis, treatment, and standard of care for many orphan diseases, thanks in no small part to the advocacy efforts of the medical community, patients and their families, and rare disease organizations.

In my congressional district, I have met with a number of constituents and their families whose lives have been impacted by rare diseases, cystic fibrosis among them.

Cystic fibrosis is a genetic disease affecting approximately 30,000 children and adults in the United States and is characterized by a reduction in the flow of salt and water across cell membranes, which leads to the buildup of thick, sticky mucus in the lungs. In 1955, with limited therapies available, children with cystic fibrosis were not expected to live long enough to attend elementary school. Today, due to significant improvements in medical treatment and care, people with the disease are living longer, healthier lives. The median predicted age of survival now stands at 38 years.

Today, I have never been more hopeful of the promise science holds for all patients affected by rare diseases; however, there remains much work to be done. On this sixth annual International Rare Disease Day, I join with patients and their families in urging my colleagues to think about what more Congress can do to help bring hope to those suffering from rare diseases.

CLUSTER MUNITIONS CIVILIAN PROTECTION ACT OF 2013

HON. JAMES P. MCGOVERN

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 28, 2013

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, today I am honored to join my esteemed colleagues, Representative CHARLES BOUSTANY (R-LA) and Senators DIANNE FEINSTEIN (D-CA) and PATRICK LEAHY (D-VT) in introducing the Cluster Munitions Civilian Protection Act of 2013. This bill will restrict the use and deployment of dangerous cluster munitions.

Cluster bombs are canisters designed to open in the air before making contact, dispersing between 200 and 400 small munitions that can saturate a radius of 250 yards. The bombs are intended for military use when attacking enemy troop formations, but are often used in or near populated areas. This is a problem because up to 40 percent of these bomblets fail to explode and become de facto landmines, posing a significant risk to civilians—particularly children—lasting years after a conflict ends.

The Cluster Munitions Civilian Protection Act prevents any U.S. military funds from being used on cluster munitions with a failure rate of more than 1 percent, unless the rules of engagement specify that cluster munitions (1) will only be used against clearly defined military targets, and (2) will not be used where civilians are known to be present or in areas normally inhabited by civilians.

The bill requires the president to report to Congress on the plan to clean up unexploded cluster munitions, and it includes a national security waiver allowing the president to waive the prohibition if he determines such a waiver is vital to national security.

Mr. Speaker, current law prohibits U.S. sales, exports and transfers of cluster munitions that have a failure rate exceeding 1 percent. The law also requires any sale, export or transfer agreement to include a requirement that the cluster munitions will be used only against military targets. Regrettably, the Pentagon insists that the U.S. should continue to have the ability to use millions of stockpiled cluster munitions that have estimated failure rates of 5 to 20 percent until 2018. This is simply not acceptable; we can do better.

I believe strongly that the United States should be an international leader in ending the terrible toll on civilian populations caused by the high failure rate of these weapons. Passage of this bill would establish in law the Pentagon's standard of a 99 percent functioning rate for all U.S. cluster munitions, and ensure that our deployment and use of these munitions adhere uniformly to this standard. We must do everything possible to spare innocent civilians intended for military targets. The current risk posed by cluster munitions is simply unacceptable.

In 2011, Handicap International studied the effects of cluster bombs in 24 countries and regions, including Afghanistan, Chechnya, Laos and Lebanon. Its report found civilians make up 98 percent of those killed or injured by cluster bombs, and 27 percent of the casualties were children.

The Oslo Convention on Cluster Munitions—which has been signed by 111 countries and ratified by 77—prohibits the production, use and export of cluster munitions and requires signatories to eliminate their arsenals within eight years. While nearly all of our major military allies have joined this treaty, to date, the United States has not.

There will always be those who will argue against such a change in military policy and practice, who will say this can't be done. History argues otherwise. I am hopeful that we can make significant progress on this issue and pass this legislation during the 113th Congress.